



RUNGE & Co., Serial No. 9/673,136

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**CLEAN VERSION OF AMENDMENTS**

Amend claims 19, 27, 30, 34-37 and add new claims 38-39 as follows:

B1 *sub a* 19. (amended) A dry microorganism culture which comprises at least one microorganism species in carrier-bound form, wherein the culture is present in the form of particles which

- a) have a particle size of at least about 0.1 mm and
- b) comprise from about  $10^{10}$  to  $10^{12}$  cfu/g of at least one microorganism species; and
- c) are compressed.

B2 *sub c2* 27. (amended) A process for producing a dry microorganism culture, comprising at least one microorganism species in carrier-bound form, which comprises

- a) dissolving or suspending at least one substance suitable for forming a carrier in a liquid comprising at least one microorganism species,
- b) drying the resultant mixture in a spray-dryer, for the spray-drying use being made of a conditioned dried gas having a dew point of less than about  $+5^{\circ}\text{C}$ , heated to a temperature in the range of above about  $80^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and
- c) removing the dried material from the spray dryer, this dried material having an exit temperature of from about  $45$  to  $75^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

B3 *n2* 30. (amended) Dry compressed microorganism culture according to claim 19, obtained from a powder concentrate of microorganism culture dried in a spray-dryer, for

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the spray-drying use being made of a conditioned dried gas having a dew point of less than about +5°C , heated to a temperature in the range of above about 80°C.

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16 34. (amended) A process as claimed in claim 31<sup>13</sup>, wherein the spray-drying is performed in a spray-dryer in which a conditioned dried gas is employed having a dew point of less than about +5°C , heated to a temperature in the range of above about 80°C.

17 35. (amended) A starter culture for foodstuffs and feedstuffs comprising a microorganism culture as claimed in claim 19<sup>1</sup>, or prepared by a process for producing a dry microorganism culture, comprising at least one microorganism species in carrier-bound form, which comprises

- a) dissolving or suspending at least one substance suitable for forming a carrier in a liquid comprising at least one microorganism species,
- b) drying the resultant mixture in a spray-dryer, for the spray-drying use being made of a conditioned dried gas having a dew point of less than about +5°C, heated to a temperature in the range of above about 80°C, and
- c) removing the dried material from the spray dryer, this dried material having an exit temperature of from about 45 to 75°C.

18 36. (amended) A foodstuff or feedstuff obtainable by using a microorganism culture as claimed in claim 19<sup>1</sup> or prepared by a process for producing a dry microorganism culture, comprising at least one microorganism species in carrier-bound form, which comprises

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- a) dissolving or suspending at least one substance suitable for forming a carrier in a liquid comprising at least one microorganism species,
  - b) drying the resultant mixture in a spray-dryer, for the spray-dryer use being made of a conditioned dried gas having a dew point of less than about +5°C, heated to a temperature in the range of above about 80°C, and
  - c) removing the dried material from the spray-dryer, this dried material having an exit temperature of from about 45 to 75°C.

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19 37. (amended) A process as claimed in claim 35, wherein the spray-drying is performed in a spray-dryer employing a conditioned dried gas having a dew point of less than about +5°C, heated to a temperature in the range of above about 80°C.

35 38. (New) A powder concentrate of a microorganism culture comprising from about  $4 \times 10^{11}$  to  $10^{12}$  cfu/g of at least one microorganism species.

39. (New) The powder concentrate of claim 38 having a water activity  $a_w$  of less than 0.4.